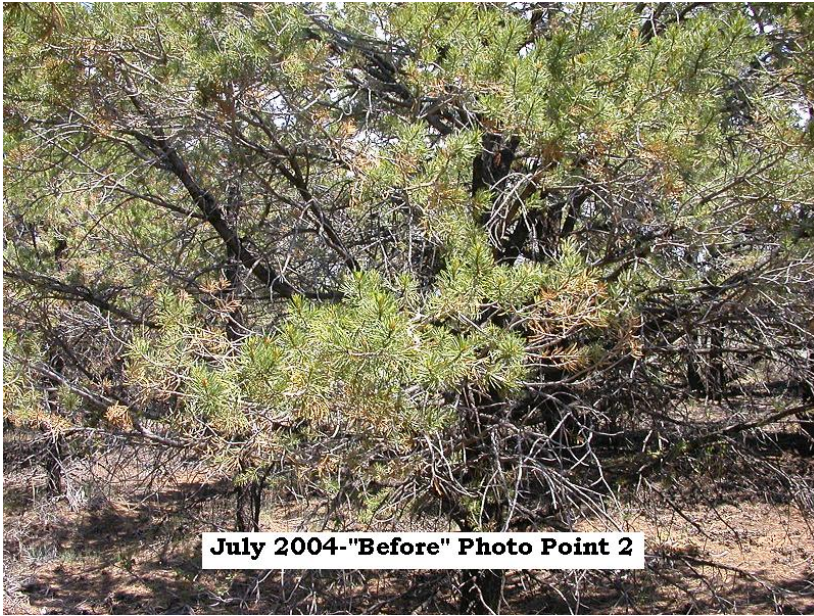


Ray Mesa Fuel Mitigation Project Phase 1

By Heather O'Hanlon



July 2004-"Before" Photo Point 2

July, 2004, the Moab Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with coordination from the State of Utah, (Dept. of Natural Resources) Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands (DNR) proposes to implement (phase I) a hazardous fuels reduction project on 355 acres of public lands administered by the BLM adjacent to and surrounding private homes and State-owned property along County Road 162 in the vicinity of Ray Mesa. Phase II will include 3000 acres to the east and south.

Approximately 30 miles southeast of Moab, UT or 8 miles east of LaSal, UT, Ray Mesa encounters countless strikes from lightning during monsoon season. The neighboring

community and wildland fire fighters have had their fair share of close calls while defending homes from wildfire. Private property and the safety of homeowners would be jeopardized in the event of another fire, as some of the existing homes have been constructed of highly flammable materials and are currently surrounded by hazardous fuels.

In the past one hundred years, a variety of actions such as wildfire suppression, timber harvest and livestock grazing in the proposed treatment area have altered the vegetative community. The proposed action would conform to Rangeland Health Standards by providing a more reliable forage base for livestock and improved vegetative diversity in the Ray Mesa area.

The bull hog has been brought in to reduce invasive species and beetle infected trees on terrain that is less than 30% grade. Canyons and steeper terrain are being treated by squads and crews with chain saws and piled for jackpot burns. Burning will take place in the winter after the slash has had time to cure and snow is on the ground.



July 2004-- "After" Photo Point

Homeowners have already combined efforts with the DNR to write a community fire plan. Lots and homes are currently being assessed for hazardous fuel reduction. The local volunteer fire department has been trained and red-carded and has secured BLM RFA grant money for wildland fire fighting equipment and additional training.

Ray Mesa Bullhog Treatment Area

